

Kremlin Troops Move In to Evict Lithuania Aides

By FRANCIS X. CLINES

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MOSCOW, April 5 — Continuing its campaign of pressure, the Kremlin sent troops on another foray in the Lithuanian capital today and repeated its refusal to hold formal talks with separatist leaders until the Baltic republic voids its declaration of independence.

A Lithuanian spokesman, reached by telephone from Moscow, said 50 Soviet soldiers moved into the Chief Prosecutor's office in Vilnius to evict civil servants loyal to Vytautas Landsbergis, Lithuania's President.

The prosecutor's office, which oversees federal law in the republic, has been the scene of a confrontation over who holds sway in Lithuania, Moscow or the breakaway Parliament. Both sides have named chief prosecutors to run the bureau, but the prosecutor installed by Moscow is in place because of the presence of Soviet troops.

No Resistance Reported

The Soviet soldiers evicted the Lithuanian workers without resistance or injury, the Lithuanian spokesman said. With Moscow's order last week that foreign correspondents leave the republic, confirmation of the report was difficult.

As the troop movements were taking place, Aleksandr N. Yakovlev, a top adviser and political ally to President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, spoke out against Lithuania's March 11 declaration of in-

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dependence. He called the move a blow "directed against perestroika," the Soviet leader's plan to revive the country through economic and political restructuring.

Tonight, the Lithuanian legislature crafted a message to Mr. Gorbachev pleading for "honest dialogue" that is not "accompanied by arbitrary actions by your armed forces."

Mr. Yakovlev met informally with Lithuanian representatives on Tuesday, the day that Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze arrived in Washington for talks on a summit meeting between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev. That small concession seemed to ease the crisis for a day and soften Mr. Shevardnadze's arrival. Moscow and Washington announced today that the talks are scheduled to begin on May 30.

In an interview today with Tass, the Soviet press agency, Mr. Yakovlev said that while the initial talks with Lithuania were "frank from both sides," the independence declaration would continue to be viewed as unconstitutional by the Kremlin. "The Lithuanian deputies were told that a normal dialogue on all issues of mutual interest was possible on the basis of the situation that existed before March 10," he declared, referring to Lithuania's status before its legislature voted to secede from the Soviet Union.

Developments in Estonia

The separatist movement in Estonia moved ahead at the deliberately slower pace set by leaders in Tallinn, the republic's capital. A new legislative session was called next week to form a "temporary government" to lead toward an eventual declaration of independence. President Gorbachev telephoned the Estonian leader, Arnold F. Ruutel, on Tuesday night to warn Estonia against following Lithuania into delacing independence.

In the third Baltic republic, Latvia, a Communist Party congress scheduled Friday in Riga, the capital, is expected to follow the two other republics' parties in splitting from the Soviet Com-



Associated Press

Supporters of the Soviet Government demonstrating yesterday outside television studios in Vilnius, Lithuania. They protested the cancellation by the Lithuanians of Russian-language broadcasts.

munists over the independence issue. But in the legislature in Latvia, the majority of the Latvia members are expected to remain loyal to the Kremlin. Close to half the population of the republic are non-Latvians favoring Moscow.

Mr. Gorbachev is closely following how united the Baltic republics will be in their separatist drives.

Gorbachev's 2 Vulnerabilities

While the Soviet leader must be sensitive to global factors like the cautions by the Bush Administration against using force to resolve questions of sovereignty, he must also try to avoid acceding to a Baltic settlement that would invite other disgruntled Soviet republics and nationality groups

to leave the union.

Lithuanian officials today increased their overtures for compromise with the Kremlin. Their chief representative in Moscow, Egidius Bickauskas, said in an interview with Soviet reporters that the republic "may offer more than the central government expects" in the way of compromise. He was not specific but again talked of the possibility of submitting the independence issue to a referendum, which Mr. Gorbachev has insisted is a minimum step for the republic before it can legally contemplate independence.

And the legislature in Vilnius wrestled for another day with crafting a diplomatic reply to Mr. Gorbachev's warning last weekend that "grave consequences" threatened unless the independence declaration was repealed in order to open the way to full negotiations. The Lithuanian authorities expressed optimism on Tuesday when Mr. Yakovlev finally agreed to meet with Mr. Bickauskas, and they have since avoided fresh denunciations of the Kremlin, hoping that further talks would follow.

The Troops Roll In

That hope was not realized during the day as Lithuanian spokesmen reported what they said was the most forceful movement of Soviet troops in a week. They said a well-armed contingent of 50 soldiers arrived this afternoon at the prosecutor's office, where workers loyal to the Lithuanians have been resisting Moscow's attempts to supersede the local prosecutor.

The prosecutor's office is a focal point of Soviet law in the republic, and its functions includes prosecuting those refusing to enter the Soviet military. Many young Lithuanians are resisting



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A platoon of 50 Soviet soldiers reportedly moved into the Chief Prosecutor's office in Vilnius.

the Soviet draft. Others are deserting now that the republic has declared its independence. Their cases are dealt with by separate military tribunals.

The state-controlled press and television continued to present heavily pro-Kremlin reports on the crisis, focusing on complaints from the republic's Russian and Polish minorities. Moscow has said that the rights of the minorities in Lithuania must be considered before any secession can go forward. The controlled reports gave little note to the Lithuanian explanation of why independence was justified.

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